



DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE



Defense Civilian Personnel Advisory Service

## **Recognizing Employees in a High Performance Culture**

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# Topics

- Rewards and Recognition
- Best Practices
- Building Effective Recognition Programs





# Rewards and Recognition

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- Components are responsible for developing rewards and recognition programs that embody strong organizational principles through the development of consistent policies and organization rules
- DoD policy allows supervisors the flexibility to recognize employees using a variety of incentives and recognition methods such as:
  - Non-monetary recognition
  - Monetary Recognition
  - Quality Step Increases (QSIs)
- Employee recognition should occur throughout the appraisal period to recognize performance as soon as possible after it occurs
  - Transparency is key, the “Rules of the Game” are standardized across DoD, and Human Resources professionals can better serve supervisors





## Rewards and Recognition

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- Encourage managers to ask employees how they like to be recognized
- Find ways to engage employees that are more interactive, and take advantage of using technology
- Employee recognition idea advises recognizing employees who help others. The **“Make Others Great” monthly award** recognizes an employee who exemplifies the kind of collaboration and teamwork it takes to help make others great
- Specific, timely and social recognition can amplify the achievements of anyone in your organization, no matter their job title or tenure, and it also motivates employees to do that same awesome thing again





# Rewards and Recognition

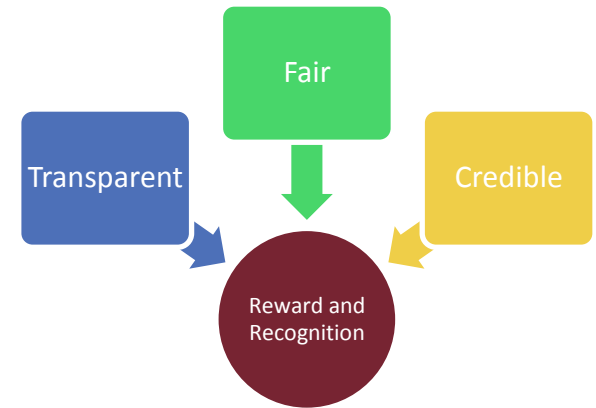
- To be most effective, rewards and recognition programs should be tailored to the unique needs of organizations and individuals.
- Rewards should be meaningful measures of performance to clearly identify how performance aligns to the Agency's mission and goals
- Rewards and recognition principles:
  - Achievements should be significant in nature
  - Clear distinctions should be made for different levels of performance and contribution
  - An organization-based reason should justify the reward and recognition. It's not an entitlement
  - Programs should be routinely assessed to ensure achievement of goals
  - Achievement should exceed expectations in order to qualify
  - Transparency should be built into all steps of the process by defining clear processes and making information about outcomes readily available to the workforce





# The Process

➤ New Beginnings seeks to improve communication between supervisors and employees, providing more transparent processes and improving recruiting, developing and rewarding DoD employees



➤ If employees feel that the assessment method has not been fair, the result could be damaging, and even demotivating





# New Beginnings Initiatives

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- The Design Teams recommended:
  - Reinforced transparency in the recognition/reward process through defined procedures and criteria
  - Simplified and streamlined rewards and recognition approval processes
  - Focus on non-monetary recognition for DoD reward and recognition programs
  - Continuous recognition throughout the year, not just on the 365<sup>th</sup> Day
  - Standardized Quality Step Increase (QSIs) policy across the Department





## Best Practices

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- Research has shown that employee recognition is an important part of a management approach, to reinforce positive behaviors and expectations of employees in order to deliver higher levels of productivity, lower employee turnover rates, and increase occupational results
- An effective employee recognition program will not only be beneficial for employees, but to your organization







# Streamlined Process for Administering Awards

- To be meaningful and most effective, rewards and recognition should be granted as soon as possible following the performance or contribution
- Streamlining the existing rewards administration processes decreases time associated with nominating and approving rewards
- The authority to approve rewards and recognition should be delegated to the lowest level possible
  - Component Heads have the authority to delegate and administer awards, and may come up with their own procedures to establish and manage their recognition and rewards programs
- Awards should be administered electronically to help facilitate the process





# Quality Step Increases (QSIs) Policy Update

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- DoDI 1400.25 Volume 451, will be reissued to standardize the QSI process across the DoD Enterprise:
  - Any employee should be eligible based on 5 CFR Part 531, Subpart E
  - QSIs should be awarded only immediately after receipt of a rating of record and should be processed as soon as possible
  - Organization expectations should clearly defining “sustained performance of high quality significantly above fully successful”
  - Performance toward a QSI is in support of the organization’s mission and goals
  - QSIs are supported by adequate justification by the Supervisor





# Non-Monetary Recognition

- Frequent feedback, small items such as plaques, public acknowledgement, and a simple thank you are generally more effective than cash bonuses at motivating performance and engagement
- Emphasizing recognition and non-monetary awards as an integral aspect of the total rewards package is an inexpensive means to increase morale and motivate employee performance
- The effectiveness and availability of non-monetary forms of recognition should be stressed both in policy and in training and education
- Non-monetary forms of recognition:
  - Frequent feedback, Peer-to-Peer, Trophy, Coin, Plaques, Certificates, Public Acknowledgement, or a simple thank you!
  - Time off awards may also be used to reward employee contributions





# Be Creative!

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- Write about employee in a organization-wide email
- Feature employee in the organization newsletter
- Post a thank you note on an employee's door or locker
- Arrange for a boss several levels up to stop by to say thanks
- Pick an unusual or funny 'trophy' object and place it on an employee's desk for a month, then rotate the trophy to the next recipient
- At a staff meeting, award an Employee of the Month. Encourage each work unit to submit nominations, and consider all winners for an annual award
- Start an employee recognition program





# Recognize Groups

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- Arrange for a work unit to present the results of their efforts directly to upper management or at a Commander's Conference
- Publish a "kudos" column in your organizational newsletter
- Ask a higher level manager to attend a meeting with your employees during which you thank individuals and groups for their specific contributions
- Send a letter to all team members at the conclusion of a project, thanking them for their participation





## Specific Awards Recognition

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- Find ways to reward department-specific performance
  - Create an Above and Beyond the Call of Duty (ABCD) Award
- Establish a “Behind the Scenes” award specifically for those whose actions are not usually in the limelight
- Start a suggestion program and publicly recognize the positive impact of the solutions employees devise for problems
- When you hear a positive remark about someone, repeat it to that person as soon as possible (Face-to-face is best, e-mail or voice mail)
- Encourage Peer-to-Peer recognition





# No Cost Recognition

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- Create and post an “Employee Honor Roll” in lounge or break area
- Write a letter of praise recognizing specific contributions and accomplishments
- Acknowledge individual achievements by using employee names in status reports
- Post a large “celebration calendar” in your work area. Tack on notes of recognition to specific dates
- Use 3x5 cards to write “You’re special because...” statements
  - Employees can collect the cards and refer to them when things aren’t going well





## References

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- DoDI 1400.25 Volume 451-Awards  
[http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/pdf/140025\\_vol451.pdf](http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/pdf/140025_vol451.pdf)
- Additional resources are available on the DCPAS LERD web site at: <https://dodhrinfo.cpms.osd.mil/Directorates/HROPS/Labor-and-Employee-Relations/Pages/Home1.aspx>, including:
  - Awards
  - Supervisory Role Focus on Performance
  - Performance Overview for Employees
  - Communicating With Employees
  - Performance Management and Appraisal Program Toolkit
- Training & Development may be found on the New Beginnings web site at: <https://dodhrinfo.cpms.osd.mil/New-Beginnings/Pages/Home1.aspx>







# Questions

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Email: [dodhra.mc-alex.dcpas.mbx.hrops-lerd-perf-mgmt@mail.mil](mailto:dodhra.mc-alex.dcpas.mbx.hrops-lerd-perf-mgmt@mail.mil)

